

Is “Baby Jesus” Just a Children’s Story?

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In my house, we watch *Frosty the Snowman* any month of the year; that’s how much my toddler loves it. I enjoyed watching *Frosty* as a child and I still do as an adult, but *Frosty* is very much a children’s story. My toddler will ask to watch it, or sing the songs, or act out the parade on any given day. The songs, animation, and story all particularly appeal to young children. Yes, *Frosty the Snowman* is a children’s story. It is a nice, family-friendly, nostalgia-inducing Christmas story, but it is *just* a children’s story.

What about the very first Christmas story? Is the birth of Jesus *just* a children’s story? A virgin is visited by an angel, becomes pregnant, gives birth among animals, and angels tell lowly shepherds that the Son of God and Savior of the world has just been born in the little town of Bethlehem—is that *just* a children’s story? Is it a make-believe story which can do no more for us than any other make-believe story?

No, the story of Jesus’ birth is nothing like make-believe stories. It is **an historical account** communicating real benefits to both children and adults, people of all ages. Holy Scripture is better attested to than any other ancient document. It records this divine event which was foretold many years in advance. This coming Savior was promised to Adam’s line (Genesis 3:15), and then more specifically to Abraham’s line (Genesis 26:4), and finally to David’s line (Jeremiah 23:5-6). This coming Savior was prophesied to be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14). This coming Savior was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). All this, and more, has come to pass. *Just* a children’s story? No, not even a story at all, but a **factual record** of God’s work in human history for people of all ages.

The four Gospels and Acts, which record the life of Jesus and the ministry of His apostles in detail, are *historical* accounts. They were drawn from *eyewitness testimony*, not folklore developed from oral tradition. Non-Christian writers in the decades that followed also corroborated the basic facts concerning the life, ministry, and death of Jesus. Such extra-biblical writers noted that the same Apostles and Evangelists who insisted that Jesus had risen also were willing to die for that message.

Prominent among those writers are the Jewish historian Josephus and the Roman historian Tacitus. Clearly, Jesus was a *real, historical* man—an unusual and amazing man, too, because He also was the Son of God.

History and the Bible both reveal *that* Jesus came, but the Bible, with its “Good News” or Gospel message, uniquely explains *why* His coming matters. The Son of God took on human flesh for your salvation. The law of God demands that you live a perfect life and it demands that you be punished in hell if you do not live such a life. Without the Son of God coming as your substitute, you would be doomed to hell because you are sinful, but the Son of God has come as your substitute. He lived a perfect life. He bore the punishment for your sin, and rose from the grave—winning forgiveness and eternal life for you.

The Son of God became as we are—assuming, partaking in, our flesh. The tiny head which Mary lovingly kissed would one day wear a crown of thorns. The little hand which wrapped around Joseph’s finger would one day be pierced by a nail. The baby Jesus was placed in the wood of the manger so that one day He would be nailed to the wood of the cross. His precious, divine blood would be shed to conquer sin and death’s hold on you. Jesus was born to live and die for you. Rising back to life, Jesus defeated sin and death for you. Jesus was born for your salvation.

*To you this night is born a Child
Of Mary, chosen Virgin mild;
This little Child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth.*
 (“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come,” ELH, 126:3)

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